

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CU-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

PRS-01 PA-01 /024 W

-----241330Z 021789 /46

P 241041Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7769

INFO USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USNATO 0847

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUDAPEST 246

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, HU

SUBJECT: CHARTER 77 DRAWS SUPPORT IN HUNGARY

1. WESTERN MEDIA BEGAN REPORTING JANUARY 20 THAT A GROUP OF THIRTY HUNGARIAN INTELLECTUALS HAVE SENT A LETTER OF SUPPORT TO THE CZECH SIGNERS OF CHARTER 77, STATING THAT THEIR CAUSE WAS OF SIGNIFICANCE TO ALL OF EUROPE. SHORTLY THEREAFTER, THE NAMES OF SIX OF THE SIGNERS, FOUR OF WHOM WERE WELL KNOWN FOR PAST "NEW LEFT" ACTIVISM AND AS MEMBERS OF THE HARASZTI/HEGEDUS GROUP CAME TO LIGHT AND WERE WIDELY BROADCAST. ONE OF THEM FERENC FEHE GAVE A TELEPHONE INTERVIEW TO AUSTRIAN RADIO, AND CONFIRMED THAT THE GROUP HAD SENT THE LETTER. HE ALSO EMPHASIZED  
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THAT THERE WAS NOTHING IN THE LETTER THAT TOUCHED ON HUNGARY IN ANY WAY.

2. SINCE THE ORIGINAL NEWS REPORTS, IT HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED THROUGH EMBASSY P&C SOURCES THAT THE NUMBER OF SIGNEERS WAS ACTUALLY ABOUT TWENTY, NINETEEN OF WHOM ARE NOW KNOWN TO US. THE IGNERS ARE ALMOST ALL ASSOCIATED

TO GREATER OR LESSER DEGREES WITH THE GROUP OF DISCIPLES OF THE LATE PHILOSOPHER GYORGY LUKACS AND THE SO-CALLED "NEW LEFT," HEGEDUS/HARASZTI GROUP WHICH THEY CONSTITUTED RATHER LOOSELY THROUGH THEIR ASSOCIATION IN THE FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY OF EOTVOS LORAND UNIVERSITY IN BUDAPEST.

3. SOME OF THE SIGNERS, LIKE MIKLOS HARASZTI, AGNES HELLER, GYORGY AND MARIA MARKUS AND FERENC FEHER HAVE BEEN ACTIVE, OUTSPOKEN AND IN TROUBLE BEFORE. OTHERS, WHILE KNOWN TO BELONG TO THE SAME CIRCLES, HAVE NOT PREVIOUSLY BEEN PUBLICLY ACTIVE IN DISSIDENT CAUSES. A COUPLE OF THESE, LIKE POET, PLAYWRIGHT AND TRANSLATOR ISTVAN EORSI AND NOVELIST MIKLOS MESZOLY ARE RATHER PROMINENT.

4. SEVERAL OF THE SIGNERS ARE NEWCOMERS TO THE SPOTLIGHT OF EITHER NOTABLE PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT OR DISSIDENCE, AND INCLUDE YOUNGER PHILOSOPHERS, WRITERS/ AND ECONOMISTS.

5. WHILE ALL OF THOSE MENTIONED SO FAR BELONG TO ONE LOOSELY DEFINABLE CATEGORY, THERE IS ONE ADDITIONAL SIGNER WHO STANDS OUT, HUNGARY'S MOST BRILLIANT, INTERNATIONALLY FAMOUS AND LOCALLY IDOLIZED YOUNG CONCERT PIANIST ZOLTAN KOCSIS.

6. THE LINE-UP OF KNOWN SIGNERS IS AS FOLLOWS:

MIKLOS HARASZTI, 32, WRITER, ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL  
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LEADERS OF THE "NEW LEFT" ALONG WITH HEGEDUS WHO, HOWEVER, DOES NOT APPEAR ON THE LIST OF SIGNERS.

HARASZTI, A GRADUATE IN PHILOSOPHY AND RUSSIAN OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BUDAPEST, HAS BEEN A POLITICAL ACTIVIST SINCE 1965 WHEN HE ORGANIZED THE VIETNAM SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE AND LED THE DEMONSTRATIONS IN FRONT OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY THAT YEAR. SHORTLY THEREAFTER THE COMMITTEE WAS DISSOLVED BY AUTHORITIES AND HARASZTI WAS ACCUSED OF "MARXIST AND SPLITTIST" ACTIVITIES. IN 1966 HE WAS EXPELLED FROM THE UNIVERSITY AND IN 1968 HE DREW HIS FIRST SHORT PRISON SENTENCE AS A "MARXIST CONSPIRATOR". HE HAS BEEN ACCUSED OF "UTOPIANISM AND PSEUDOREVOLUTIONARY ATTITUDES" AND ARRESTED AGAIN IN 1970 FOR "AGITATION."

SOME OF HIS MORE FAMOUS QUOTES ARE: "IN HUNGARY PEACE IS EVERYTHING -- GOALS ARE NOTING: "THE GAP BETWEEN THE ELITES AND THE MASSES IS BECOMING EVER WIDER."

AFTER BEING EXPELLED FROM THE UNIVERSITY, HARASZTI WENT TO WORK IN VARIOUS FACTORIES. IN 1972 HE WROTE A BOOK BASED ON HIS EXPERIENCES IN A TRACTOR FACTORY. IN MARCH 1973 HE WAS ARRESTED AND THE MANUSCRIPT SEIZED. HARASZTI WAS ACCUSED WITH AGITATION AND WITH SAYING "THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE SITUATION OF WORKERS IN CAPITALIST AND SOCIALIST COUNTRIES". LATER THAT YEAR HE AND WRITER GYORGY KONRAD WERE TRIED, BUT RECEIVED A SUSPENDED SENTENCE.

AGNES HELLER, 48, PHILOSOPHER, PROMINENT "NEW LEFT, WRITER, FIRED IN 1973 FROM INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN CONNECTION WITH HARASZTI TRIAL. AUTHOR OF NUMEROUS BOOKS INCLUDING "ARISTOTLE'S ETHICS AND THE ETHOS OF ANTIQUITY", "THE DISSOLUTION OF MORAL STANDARDS" AND THE "THE SOCIOLOGY OF MORALITY." SHE IS CONFIDENTIAL

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ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL DISCIPLES OF GYORGY LUKACS.

MS. HELLER PUBLICLY DENOUNCED THE CZECHOSLOVAKIAN INVASION OF 1968. IN SPITE OF HER CONTINUED ACTIVISM, SHE HAS NOT BEEN IN PRISON. HER LATEST BOOK ON MARXIST PHILOSOPHY WAS PUBLISHED ONLY LAST MONTH AND REVIEWED IN THE PRESTIGIOUS LITERARY WEEKLY ELET ES IRODALOM.

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-----241331Z 021915 /46

P 241041Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7770

INFO USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN  
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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BUADAPEST 246

FERENC FEHER, PHILOSOPHER, HUSBAND OF AGNES HELLER.

GYORGY MARKUS, 39, SOCIOLOGIST, GRADUATE IN  
ENGLISH AND CHINESE, UNIVERSITY OF BUDAPEST. PUBLICATION:  
"THE CHALLENGE OF THE COUNTERCULTURE AND THE NEW LEFT".

MARIA MARKUS - SOCIOLOGIST, WIFE OF GYORGY MARKUS,  
CO-AUTHOR WITH A. HEGEDUS OF BOOK: "THE NEW LEFT IN  
HUNGARY" 1974 MERVE VERLAG, BERLIN.

MIHALY VAJDA - WRITER, CHARTER MEMBER OF "NEW LEFT"  
GROUP.

MIKLOS MESZOLY - 56, WRITER, FORMER DIRECTOR OF  
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STATE PUPPET THEATER 1950-53, WRITER OF NUMEROUS  
SUCCESSFUL NOVELS, PLAYS AND SHORT STORIES.

GYORGY NEMES, 67, WRITER, PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL  
PEACE COUNCIL 1951-55, FORMER CHIEF EDITOR OF LITERARY  
WEEKLY ELET ES IRODALOM, WINNER OF JOZSEF ATTILA  
LITERARY AND ROZSA FERENC JOURNALISTIC MEDALS.

ISTVAN EORSI - 46, VERY PROMINENT POET, PLAY-  
WRIGHT, CRITIC, TRANSLATOR, PUBLISHED EVERYWHERE.  
DISCIPLE OF LUKACS, NOT PREVIOUSLY ACTIVE.

ZOLTAN KOCSIS - 24, GENERALLY RECOGNIZED AS  
HUNGARY'S MOST BRILLIANT CONCERT PIANIST. HAD  
EXTREMELY BUSY HUNGARIAN AND INTERNATIONAL CONCERT  
SCHEDULE UNTIL LATELY WHEN HE HAS BECOME INVOLVED WITH  
COMPOSING AVANT-GARDE AND ELECTRONIC MUSIC.

ERZSEBET VEZER, LITERARY HISTORIAN, EXPERT ON EARLY  
20TH CENTURY HUNGARIAN LITERATURE AND SPECIALIST ON  
FAMOUS HUNGARIAN POET ENDRE ADY.

ZADOR TORDAI, 53, LITERARY HISTORIAN AND PHILOSOPHER. RESEARCHER IN HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY, UNIVERSITY OF CLUJ, ROMANIA IN 1950'S, MEMBER OF INSTITUTE OF PHILOSOPHY, HUNGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, AUTHOR OF SEVERAL BOOKS.

PAL REZ, 47, WRITER, TRANSLATOR, HISTORIAN, EDITOR AT LITERARY PUBLISHERS.

FERENC DONATH, ECONOMIST, LATEST PUBLICATION IN SEPTEMBER 1976 ISSUE OF INTELLECTUAL MONTHLY VALOSAG ENTITLED: "ECONOMIC GROWTH AND SOCIALIST AGRICULTURE". ALLEGEDLY NEPHEW OF LATE PM IMRE NAGY.

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SANDOR RADNOTI - LITERARY REVIEWER.

JUDIT HABER - SOCIOLOGIST.

FERENC JANDSSY - ECONOMIST.

JANOS KIS - PHILOSOPHER.

GYORGY BENCZE - PHILOSOPHER.

7. COMMENT: THE COURAGEOUS ACT OF PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR CHARTER 77 BY A SIZABLE NUMBER OF INTELLECTUALS FROM A NEIGHBORING SOCIALIST COUNTRY IS CERTAINLY A SIGNIFICANT ACTION, ONE WHICH CANNOT FAIL TO HAVE AN IMPACT AND AT THE SAME TIME CAUSE GREAT PAIN AND DISCOMFORT IN PARTY CIRCLES IN BUDAPEST, PRAGUE, MOSCOW AND ELSEWHERE. THINGS HAVE BEEN RATHER QUIET IN HUNGARY FOR A LONG TIME WHILE THE POT HAS BEEN SIMMERING IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, POLAND AND THE GDR. NOW, A LONG PACIFIED HUNGARIAN INTELLIGENCIA HAS SHOWN SOME SIGNS OF LIFE.

8. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE HUNGARIAN SIGNERS? PRESENTLY THE BETTING IN LOCAL INTELLECTUAL CIRCLES IS THAT NOTHING WILL HAPPEN TO THEM. MOST OF THE "NEW LEFT" ACTIVISTS ESCAPED RELATIVELY UNSCATHED FROM EARLIER DISSIDENT ACTS IN THE MORE DIFFICULT, PRE-HELSINKI DAYS. OTHERS, LIKE EORSI AND KOC SIS ARE FAR TOO PROMINENT TO BE TOUCHED, THE REASONING OR PERHAPS WISHFUL THINKING GOES, SO CLOSE TO THE BELGRADE CONFERENCE.

9. UP TO MONDAY, JANUARY 24, THERE HAS BEEN NO MENTION OR CONDEMNATION IN THE MEDIA OF THE HUNGARIAN LETTER. THE JANUARY 22 EDITION OF HSWP DAILY

NEPSZABADSAG AND ALL OTHER DAILIES GAVE FAIRLY  
PROMINENT COVERAGE TO INDRA AND HUSAK STATEMENTS IN  
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PRAGUE A DAY EARLIER CONDEMNING ALL THOSE INVOLVED  
WITH CHARTER 77 IN STRONG TERMS. PRESUMABLY THIS  
APPLIES TO HUNGARIAN SIGNERS AS WELL, AND FURTHER  
ARTICLES FROM HUNGARIAN SOURCES MAY WELL APPEAR SOON  
SUPPORTING THIS POSITION.

10. THE SIGNERS DID MAKE THINGS RATHER DIFFICULT FOR  
LOCAL AUTHORITIES BY OMITTING ANY REFERENCE TO HUNGARY,  
AND BY SAYING SIMPLY THAT CHARTER 77 IS A QUESTION  
OF INTEREST TO ALL OF EUROPE, NOTE, ALL OF EUROPE,  
NOT JUST THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES. THAT CLEVER  
HUNGARIAN PHRASING CAN BE INTERPRETED IN A LOT OF DIF-  
FERENT WAYS.

11. LAST BUT NOT LEAST, IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT  
HUNGARIAN PARTY LEADERS, PARTICULARLY THOSE DEALING WITH  
CULTURAL AFFAIRS, ARE IN SYMPATHY WITH THE PLIGHT OF  
CZECH INTELLECTUALS AND ARE PAINED AT  
THEIR CZECH COMRADES' CLUMSY FAILURES TO OVERCOME  
THE RESIDUES OF 68. IT WILL BE HARD FOR THEM TO ACT  
AGAINST PEOPLE THEY DISLIKE FOR SPEAKING OUT BUT WITH  
WHOM MANY OF THEM AGREE ON THIS ISSUE ALTHOUGH OF  
COURSE NOT WITH WHAT THEY DID ABOUT IT.

12. WHAT HUNGARY DOES ABOUT CHARTER 77 WILL BE A  
NOTEWORTHY TEST OF ITS RELATIVELY LIBERAL POLICY OF ITS  
OFT-PROFESSED SUPPORT FOR ALL ASPECTS OF THE HELSINKI  
AGREEMENTS, AND OF ITS CAREFULLY NURTURED LINE TOWARD  
THE WEST IN THIS REGARD. AT THE SAME TIME, IF  
IT IS INDEED DECIDE TO OVERLOOK THIS ACT, OR TO LIMIT  
REACTION TO A FEW, PRO-FORMA CONDEMNATIONS, KADAR WILL  
HAVE TO DO A LOT OF FANCY TALKING TO HIS COMRADES TO  
THE NORTH AND TO THE EAST.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009